



# LARRY CRAIG

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For Immediate Release  
June 29, 2006

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## SENATE COMMITTEE APPROVES WATER, ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Senate Appropriations Committee approved the Fiscal Year 2007 Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations bill today. Included were several projects important to Idaho and the West.

Idaho Senator Larry Craig joined his colleague from across the aisle and the Continental Divide, Byron Dorgan of South Dakota, in an amendment to help small communities who are drowning in Safe Drinking Water Act requirements. The amendment provides an additional \$11 million to help develop new technologies. Specifically, \$5.5 million is shifted from the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Science and Technology program to the Small Systems Demonstration Projects budget, and \$5.5 million is shifted from the EPA’s Environmental Project and Management budget to the Third-Party State-Tribal Assistance Grants budget. The amendment does not alter the standards or place a moratorium on civil penalties.

Senator Craig emphasized the importance of helping our communities meet federal drinking water standards, **“Many of our communities in Idaho are small, which only exacerbates the funding problems to meet federally imposed standards. It is unrealistic to expect a town of 500 to shoulder a \$20 million expense. That is why I work to provide as many resources and assistance as we can afford to our rural communities.”**

Included in the bill are three Idaho water projects: Marsing (\$500,000); Hazelton (\$469,000); and St. Anthony (\$563,000). All three projects are receiving new federal funding.

Additional projects include:

Idaho’s Strategic Plan for Managing Noxious Weeds	\$1 million
Idaho Wolf Recovery and Management	\$805,000
Idaho Sage Grouse Management Plan	\$300,000
Coldwater Fish Habitat Conservation	\$250,000
Fire Research and Management Exchange System (UI)	\$350,000
Subsurface contaminant transport research (BSU)	\$1 million
Slickspot Peppergrass Conservation and Monitoring	\$100,000
California Condor recovery (Peregrine Fund)	\$400,000
Clifty Mountain Foothills Project	\$2.9 million
Snake River Basin Adjudication	\$20,041,000

The Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILT) program received \$235 million nationally. In 2006, Idaho communities received \$16.2 million to compensate for lost property tax revenues.

The bill now goes before the full Senate for consideration.